The COMMONWEAL

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The Church and Two Politics

THE CHURCH exerts two kinds of political force. Catholics, reacting with various degrees of disturbance to the failure of those outside the Church to recognize her supernatural character and the transcendent ends of her life and activity, are slow to consider the temporal and institutional view of the Church which outsiders see, and which exists. At the same time that the Church is a supernatural society, it is also, of course, a great temporal institution with millions of active members and thousands bound by close vows; with property, schools, communications, propaganda, money. One of the truths about the Church is that it is a responsible temporal organization. As such, it has a corporate political influence, directed by the authorities of the Church according to the form of its hierarchy.

Now people want to know what the Church is doing with this political means to defeat or sustain which side of the war. Very, very little is known. Claims and criticisms about this are backed up with small evidence indeed. The "Vatican line" is carefully guarded by the most experienced diplomatic corps in history. In so far as the central authorities have gone to the people with the Church's unified, corporate politics, they have stressed the world after the war: the condition of public affairs which they hold to be desirable and necessary. The politics appears to be the opposite of "Let us win, and then we can be free to make everything wonderful." The Vatican has apparently stressed the conditions wanted, and has not exerted force to bring these conditions about through the victory of one and the defeat of the other. This first and direct type of Church "politics" is governed not only by the Vatican and Curia, but also by the bishops and Orders. The support which the different bishops have given their individual countries in the war has varied in its intensity, but they have not in a body in any country broken with their governments. The American bishops, writing "while enjoying, as we do, a well-ordered liberty in a free country," differ radically in tone from the unhappy German hierarchy, but they too "unite with our Holy Father in praying for the attainment of a peace that will be accepted by all right-thinking governments and individuals as permeated by justice and charity." The direct political power of the Church as wielded by the bishops of the world is not unified and attached as belligerent to one of the two or more sides in the war, so far as we can know.

The second kind of politics of the Church as an institution in the world, is indirect. It is effected through its members in their own social groups—their spirits and minds and wills and bodies influenced by the Grace and teaching of the Church which they freely seek. If there is going to be a good end to the war and just conditions of peace—if this "political aim" of the Church is going to be achieved, it will have to be by this second and indirect kind of "politics." Catholics and non-Catholics will have to recognize in the encyclicals of the Popes and in the letters of the bishops and in the whole teachings of the Faith and tradition and philosophy of Christianity the conditions needed by the world. And we will have to exert ourselves in our own responsible political and social spheres with sincerity and intelligence. In the contemporary world, "the Vatican" can never, nor even try, to attain political objectives by some story-book type of "Roman politics" exercised from its tiny city. The politics of the Catholic Church must live through the free actions of men of good will doing as well as they can in their secular spheres of life, fortified and enlightened by the pervasive religious influence of the supernatural society of the Church.

National War Labor Board

BEFORE our entry into war, some months ago, we said that, when war came, American labor—since it was not a revolutionary movement—would yield voluntarily to certain wartime exigencies and that the first of these would be the suspension of the right to strike. It was obvious then as it is certain now that both national interest and public opinion in wartime cannot and will not tolerate any interruption of production. This determination is a natural one: the danger lies in the method chosen to enforce it. The danger has been that Congress, simplifying this national determination

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and responsive to what in the old days were called the "vested interests," might insist on immediate and rigid war legislation and on a repressive labor policy. The danger has been that Congress might isolate labor and demand from it, not cooperation, but the surrender of all its legitimate hopes, thus creating a cleavage—which has not existed—between labor and the rest of the country. The danger of such action—intemperate and born of panic—still exists: inevitably it must always exist in time of war. Surely the President had this danger in mind and worked to avert it when he created a twelve-man Labor Board.

Previously, the "no-strike" principle had been admitted both by the CIO and the AFL. But in agreeing to relinquish the use of labor's most powerful weapon for the duration, labor made no agreement to accept any and every form of working conditions with which it might be faced during the emergency. In no sense did it agree to let employers run production as they might see fit. It agreed to join its organized forces to those of the nation. It agreed to share the hardships that may come to all Americans—but on a footing of equality. In determining that equal share of responsibility, effort and sacrifice, labor must have a voice. In practice and in justice one cannot expect that voice to be forever saying yes.

Incessantly there must arise conflicts in the difficult adjustment of labor conditions to the general, and changing, conditions in our country at war. That is why rigid legislation at the outset of the war necessarily is inadequate to cover a situation of variable and increasing strain. That is why we think well of the newly created Labor Board, which will have the suppleness to meet the changes we foresee and, through its threefold representation of labor, employers and the public, will possess the necessary impartiality and authority. Its decisions will be more temperate, more intimately related to the facts of each case, than could be any over-all decisions taken once.

"In setting up the National War Labor Board the President provided the peaceful means," said the board's chairman, William H. Davis. The peaceful means to obtain justice for all concerned through the pluralistic representation of all parties concerned. The board will enter upon its work with the support of public opinion; its prestige will increase as it faces and overcomes great and certain difficulties: it will risk, also, the discouraging attrition of constant criticism from dissatisfied elements and the pressure upon it, to obtain immediate results, will be intense. The task of preserving social justice in war time is great and is surpassed only by the immense opportunity there exists for establishing—during this strain and these coming hardships—a fraternity and a newly implemented democracy which shall take into account all real factors in American life.

The Racial Front

FOUR MONTHS ago THE COMMONWEAL called attention editorially to the US Army's policy with regard to Negro soldiers. This policy appeared to be one of segregating Negroes into Negro units, generally commanded by white officers and generally policed by white military police. The Navy's policy has been even more strict: Negroes could serve the Navy only in the capacity of mess attendants — cooks, waiters, etc. The Army's practice naturally led to outbreaks of race feeling, certainly not calculated to promote national unity.

Once again the newspapers have carried reports of an "incident" in the Army. Information is not available as to where the fault lies in this most recent fracas, at Alexandria, Louisiana, but the reported casualties—28 Negro soldiers, 1 Negro woman and 1 state policeman—would lead one to suspect that, although the primary blame may have rested with Negroes, the means used against them were unnecessarily severe. In any case—and despite the remarkable action of Joe Louis, not only in turning over the major part of all proceeds of his recent bout with Buddy Baer ($47,100, the whole of Louis's check, plus $46,992 more from Mike Jacobs, ring officials, Baer, and preliminary fighters) to the Navy Relief Society, as well as Louis's subsequent entrance into the Army as a private—sentiment in favor of the war among Negroes remains understandably lukewarm. The natural reaction of the colored population is to wonder just how much it is worth their while to join in a fight which is generally advertised as a fight for "democracy" when their own share of democracy is at present so small and gives no promise of being much greater in the future. Public meetings which have been canvassed on this point as well as persons who are close to the general Negro population confirm this state of affairs. Obviously the feeling is not based upon any specific instances of race discrimination, but rather upon the whole record. Yet the attitude of the armed services certainly has done nothing to improve the situation. Since it is generally agreed that a united, all-out American effort will be required to win this war, why do not the authorities make a virtue of necessity and change their policy now, and freely, rather than wait until the day when events force their hand?

All the more reason, then, to welcome the suggestion made by Walter White of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to General George C. Marshall that the Army set up a special volunteer division specifically "open to all men of any race, creed, color, or national origin." To establish such a division would be to risk nothing, since the essence of the scheme is that enlistment would be strictly voluntary. It might produce a fighting unit with some

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of the qualities which have won renown for the French Foreign Legion. Above all it would act as a living testimony that in performing their civic duties, men of all races can act together and can live democracy. Perhaps it would even put an end to such idiocy as that recently recorded as emanating from the Army and Navy in their request to the Red Cross that it accept no blood from Negro donors for its blood banks, on the score that white men in the service would refuse blood plasma if they knew it had come from Negro veins.

Price Floors and Ceilings

MAKING every allowance for the non-cash income regularly consumed on the average American farm, it is safe to assert that national farm income is rarely if ever as high as it should be in relation to the income of the nation as a whole. Whether the basis for calculation is the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture or the contribution of goods, services and able-bodied Americans to the urban areas each year, American farm income has been anything but commensurate with a just return. Nevertheless certain provisions of the Price Control Bill passed by the Senate, January 10, are anything but constructive. Possibly the worst feature, the linking of farm prices and wage levels, will disappear in committee, but the enactment of so crass an example of class legislation at such a time merits consideration. The object of the price control measure is to check inflation and its attendant evils throughout the nation. Yet the amendment linking wages and farm prices could hardly be better calculated to start the fatal upward spiral, with higher prices leading to demands for higher wages, then still higher prices to keep pace, and so on *ad infinitum*. That so large a group of United States Senators should now support so bad an amendment is anything but promising.

An even greater furore, since personalities are involved, arises from the provision enabling Secretary of Agriculture Wickard to veto price ceilings set by Price Administrator Henderson. Taxes presumably will clamp a lid on business and personal profits—and to a lesser extent on salaries and wages—although there are no direct maximum wage provisions. Many critics are asking why farm products alone should be provided with a loophole in the price control barrier. If due to official deadlock the breach should widen, marked inflation will surely be on the way.

As it stands now food prices have advanced 25.5 percent during the past year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Current estimates speak of further increases within the next six months, with canned goods prices advancing from 15 to 20 percent. Inflation is no idle threat. It is already with us and will continue, but it seems to be possible to keep it from getting out of hand. Once on its dizzy way everybody loses, particularly the temporary beneficiaries of various types of class legislation. Possibly to be effective, as *Business Week* suggests on the basis of British experience, price control and rationing of goods go hand in hand. In any case this is no time to legislate in favor of special interests. If for the benefit of important constituents of the national economy there must be price floors, surely for the good of all there must likewise be ceilings.

Thrift and Salvage

IT IS probably true that as a nation we are proud, if not of our wastefulness, at least of the easy plenty that permits us to waste. But now the time has come when we must waste no more. Either we must evolve, by individuals and communities, a constructive reform—and very speedily!—or it will be imposed upon us by the iron hand of general regimentation. That is the only choice before us. And surely it is desirable that the spontaneous initiative which so really marks the American people should come into play in this all-important matter. Community leaders can perform no more vital service now than to give the stimulus, the starting push, which is all that most citizens (whether they know it or not) are waiting for.

The two departments to be covered are thrift and salvage. For the first, the methods of general or national guidance will naturally take the lead: consumer analyses, buying guides, the advice of the federal bureaus in agriculture and home economics. But salvage is a much more local matter. Though ultimate direction may be centralized, just as its ultimate goal is the general good, it must be done by individuals working very often on the potentialities of their own and their neighbors' back yards and dust bins. This is true in essence even of those ingenious discoveries already being made in factories: the Goodrich plan for salvaging the bits of rubber heretofore lost in tire reconditioning; the Los Angeles method which has begun to reclaim tin cans at a profit, for the ultimate unit here is the individual gatherer-up.

Then there are the more modest and informal activities. Children can collect paper—an item which we all waste lavishly; the National Price Administration has asked them to do it, and a local Boy Scout troop has shown how it can be done, salvaging twelve tons in less than a month. Any able-bodied person can collect scrap iron; every home has its share, every village has its junk yard. It can be used not only for the smelters which are shutting down because this necessary ingredient for steel-making is running short, but also for local needs. A Westchester village, for instance, is proudly displaying a "new" firetruck put together from junkyard scraps at a total cost of $25. These are mere beginnings.

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Lessons of European Catholicism

The political failure of Catholic efforts.

By **Paule Berault**

THE STARTLING combination of success and failure in the recent history of European Catholicism makes it well worth studying. For months the problem posed by its repeated failures in the temporal order, and more particularly in the political order, has haunted French people who are convinced of its worth and its bearing on intellectual and moral matters. Our defeat has not shaken that conviction. And we do not believe that this is clearly a problem which is of interest only for the old world. It is urgent that every Catholic, whatever his nationality, understand the causes—which come from within, perhaps, and are not merely fortuitous—of the repeated failures. For we know what hopes—hopes that are silent in France now—repose upon American Catholicism and what rôle will be expected of it in a world where all elements are interdependent or where the Anglo-Saxon will is dominant. The future of Catholicism depends in large part on the degree of understanding we have now of the requirements and nature of a Catholicism which is set in the midst of a profane world.

What is the use of pretending that Catholicism has been persecuted or misunderstood in Europe? After the war it experienced a brilliant recovery: thanks to a renewal of Christian thought there was an end to many of the attacks against the scientific achievements of Catholics, for they were able to demonstrate that they could more than hold their own in the scientific field with their unbelieving colleagues. A strong religious sentiment reaching out into many spheres of human endeavor animated an active Catholic youth movement. This victorious Catholicism sought to penetrate public life in order to renew it. I cite as examples of these social and political institutions of Catholic inspiration: the Catholic workingman's movements in Germany, Italy, Belgium and Holland, the Popular Party in Italy, the Center Party in Germany, and the Corporative State of Dolfuss.

Such temporal movements of Catholic inspiration required of both leaders and rank-and-file members such virtues as loyalty, patience, organization, faith. And what is there left of all this today? The present crisis has swept away both liberalism and socialism, the two doctrines denounced and combated by social Catholicism. Either they collapsed from within or were overwhelmed by forces they were unable to stem. But temporal Catholicism has foundered in the same whirlpool; its institutions proved to be as vulnerable as the organizations of its adversaries. In the aspect of its supernatural truth our Faith is not struck down by these temporal setbacks, but our confidence in its capacity to become incarnate in our secular life has been sadly shaken by our European disasters. All of us, religious and laymen, are trying to discover the flaw that makes the edifice so fragile.

* * *

We repeat: we do not ask of Christianity what it cannot and should not give—a theory for political action. Catholicism, as doctrine, is above all a sacramental dogma; it does not set up human institutions in rigid forms but sustains the life of each human being by sacraments which are directed to him alone. The family itself, as an example of a Christian institution, exists only as a consequence of the sacrament of matrimony. Thereafter, in public life, the Catholic is left to his own will and his own intelligence, enlightened, to be sure, by principles but principles operating only through the finite intelligences which receive and apply them. It is the application of these principles, the most sociological aspect of Catholic formation, that we should like to describe and analyze.

In Europe, except in certain French and German university circles which were particularly free, the world of believers and that of unbelievers remained closed each to the other. The Catholic, convinced of possessing the truth, condescended to approach the unbeliever only as an apostle. A necessary prerogative but a dangerous one, for unconsciously the bearer of the truth, although recognizing his infinite distance from the truth he represents, comes little by little to forget this, and assumes in his own person the perfection of the dogma in which he believes. To be sure, he admits that his private life is subject to a number of imperfections, for his mistakes are too tangible, his sins too frequent, for him to have illusions. Thanks to the practice of the examination of conscience Christian morality endows the

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private lives of believers with a spirit and a vigor which bear witness to their Faith: as husbands and wives, fathers, spiritual men, their conduct is upright and exacting, the results fruitful.

Unhappily, if there is a whole literature warning the pious man not to be covetous, angry, selfish, gluttonous, it is confined strictly to the domain of the individual. It fails to draw attention to those other "original sins of class" such as prejudices and passions in social and political matters. The child and the adolescent drink in such prejudices and passions in their family circle, later in the social set which they have inherited or chosen. And because Christian morality until very recently (and what a subject of controversy it still is) failed to apply the spirit of analysis to this important domain, the child quite spontaneously considers as a single whole the personal Catholicism of his parents—whose family life bears witness to its admirable effects—together with their opinions on matters of public life, which are the result of chance and habit. That is the way that the hereditary hatreds of the Catholicism of the Right and Left are formed. To be sure all that is needed to disassociate these compounds into their highly disparate elements is a little reflection. But we should not forget that young people are ardently single-minded and are launched into the apostolate at a very early age. The task of disseminating a truth which is and always will be far beyond them, and at the same time proposing to the unbeliever a body of truths and doctrines (not of new difficulties to resolve or too many distinctions to be made) compels these young people to adopt a total attitude. Without wishing to and often unconsciously, they identify the principles of their lives with their opinions about life. To transform young people who are inadequately prepared into active missionaries threatens to inculcate in them a sort of sectarian pride. They are the people who know the truth confronting those who are ignorant of it and they amalgamate into a single whole their prejudices and their Faith.

Let us also take into account that the apostolate is a one-way activity: the Christian believes he has everything to give and nothing to receive from the unbeliever. And because he does not distinguish sufficiently as to worth or scope, the temporal order from the dogmatic order, also because he is sure of his moral superiority (his faith being superior to any other), he willingly neglects to acquire the properly human and properly technical competence which is indispensable. For public life is a compound of institutions and determinisms.

To this danger of a dogmatism which is insufficiently well-founded or critical in public affairs must be added, in the case of many Catholics, an exclusive solicitude for their own "salvation." No doubt they know that salvation requries solicitude for others, the gift of self, but it is difficult to practice such solicitude intelligently and the spirit of charity is not always sufficient for the purpose. For the most part Catholics do not bother themselves with such subtleties. Many take as a virtue of unselfishness and sacrifice an indifference to the temporal results of their activities. It is enough for them to be engaged in a meritorious task without considering too much how successful they are with it. This human form of the spirit of resignation leads in political matters to a bad muddle of men and of forces. With the idea that every faithful act bears its fruits in the life to come, it is easy to arrive at a dangerous indifferentism toward this present life, for it is impossible to seek to play a rôle in the community and not at the same time to hope for its success. And this success must be tangible and serve as a crowning of one's action.

There is another form of indifferentism which is even more pernicious. Many Catholics form the *a priori* idea that their Faith is a means of escaping from the world, of transcending it, since the world is too wicked to be transformed. Convinced of their inability to change things, they accept whatever political forms there are. That problem is not the essential for them, since good will is always sufficient for salvation. They do not value this life sufficiently to consider it seriously; it is only a passing instrument to utilize in the least evil way possible, but that is all. This idea, which looks edifying at first, in reality rests upon a radical mistrust of the capacity of Faith to transform the world. This apparent detachment conceals a profound selfishness toward the community, a misunderstanding of the actual conditions of a truly human and spiritual life and a misunderstanding which would justify much anti-clericalism if the Church through the voice of the popes had not herself recalled that nothing in the life of man can remain alien to his Faith. A certain so-called "interior purity" most often goes with an acceptance of political passions as inevitable and with encouragement of the most dubious political excitements. We have known young people who are admirably equipped to kill but who have never realized that it is more difficult to know how to live than to be able to die. In their regard there comes to mind the sentence of the Philosopher: "Philosophy is a meditation on life and not on death."

These few remarks are not intended to be bitter or uselessly critical; they are based only on the desire to learn from the tragic experiences which have threatened all the foundations of our existence. It is our duty to analyze these experiences because Catholicism now appears to many believers and unbelievers to be the only hope for a future for which we are responsible. To measure

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up to that hope it is necessary for Catholicism to examine itself on its sociological rôle, which must be flexible, and on the temporal forms proper to politico-social Catholicism. That is why we make bold to remark: first, that the lack of a critical spirit and of a sense of proportion, where they themselves are concerned, is one of the weaknesses of Catholics.

They often show that they are skillful in discovering in others personal motives such as ambition, *amour-propre,* thirst for power. As for themselves, they too easily confuse their prejudices and their doctrine, because of an insufficient knowledge of the nature of temporal action and of the diversity of its elements. Principles are always valid and circumstances are always changing. That is why they often label as Catholic what is only the human or group reaction of a given society at a given moment.

Finally, Catholics move about too habitually in the realm of the absolute. They are more familiar with the eternal aspect of their Faith than with its slow and progressive application to the world up to the point where it is autonomous. The world cannot, then, receive the Christian message except under certain conditions which develop independently. Because of all this, Catholics too easily substitute the moral point of view for what should be a technical point of view. A moral judgment does not constitute a social documentation or a political judgment. If the moral point of view is necessary for the understanding of any situation—social or political—if it is in certain cases even the decisive point of view, it cannot by itself take the place of secular knowledge where the technical element of knowledge is uppermost. It would be too easy to apply ready-made principles to life as if they were recipes, without experimentation, without research, without personal responsibility.

Flesh and Grass

A Dakota Pioneer dies where the Prairies turned into the Dust Bowl.

By **T. D. Lyons**

IN 1934, when the Dakota dust storms raged furiously and the United States government was compelled to purchase and slaughter emaciated, starving live stock, my father, in the last month of his life, described again for us the beauties of the magnificent Dakota prairie in 1873. The region from Omaha to Fort Buford was called the Upper Missouri country, and, except for a few garden patches and some tillage and cultivation as far up as Charles Mix County, it was one great ocean of grass.

The natural phenomena of the mighty prairies awed, astonished and delighted all beholders. The mysteries of the mirage fascinated them; the glories of the northern lights (*aurora borealis*) had a mysterious influence of wonder, slightly mixed with fear; the "sundogs" which appeared on each side of the sun in the sharp, frosty winter mornings were the subject of much discussion. In summer, when the thick carpet of the Buffalo grass closely covered the earth, and the strong stems of the bunch grass grew as high as a horse's shoulder, there were many hypotheses offered by amateur naturalists to explain the fact that the prairies which produced grasses so abundantly and luxuriantly were devoid of trees. My father's explanation was that the great prairie fires, several of which he had seen raging across the plains, licked up everything in their path and prevented young trees from getting a sufficient growth to survive. The banks of the streams were fringed with willows and cotton-woods, and he deduced from this fact that they received sufficient moisture through their roots, which went down into the water courses, to enable them to survive. He explained that, in the early years, even in times of severe drought, there were no dust storms, because nature's preventive—the Buffalo grass—held even the loose, dry soil in place against the force of the heavy winds. When, however, all of the land "East of the River" had been broken up and put into crops and all the lakes and marshes were drained and a system of drainage ditches had practically destroyed the small rivers, nature's protecting blanket had been destroyed. This, of course, was merely another manifestation of the vulture aspect of the boasted "Anglo-Saxon civilization" which had destroyed the great horse herds, buffalo herds, and Indian tribes which had dwelt, from time immemorial, on the prairies of Dakota, to whom the Sioux Nations had given their name.

In 1917, when the World War stimulated wheat prices, the thirty thousand square miles of range "West of the River" were invaded and put into wheat. A season or two of excessive rainfall gave

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sufficient moisture to mature the crops, but when normal conditions returned, it was soon evident that the region had been intended by nature for a short-grass country—good only for grazing. Then, when the droughts came, there was no carpet of Buffalo grass to hold the soil and the high winds whipped it aloft hundreds of feet into the air and hundreds of miles in distance so that Dakota dust was seen in the streets of Chicago.

My father was 86, and had told us all, bluntly, in the Dakota harvest phrase, that he was near his end, saying most calmly, in the presence of Uncle Will and myself, "It is near quitting-time for me, and while I might like to stay to see some of the grandchildren get started right, still that is not to be, and, I guess, things will manage to move on some way without me."

Uncle Will read aloud a telegram which had just come from Senator Peter Norbeck to my father, telling him that he understood he was pretty sick, but that he must hang on a while longer, as South Dakota could not spare him just then—in the critical days of drought and depression, in which my father's encouragement had, on previous occasions, been so valuable to the pioneers. Uncle Will and my father then turned to a discussion of the "virtues of the buffalo grass; how it cured on the stalk in the fall; and that the oil it contained nourished stock all through a Dakota winter, so that they would come in fat in the spring."

My sister had received a Bulletin from the US Department of Agriculture, and I read aloud a statement *re* the buffalo grass:

> Buffalo Grass (Buchloe dactyloides) is the dominant grass in short grass regions. It grows on uplands and many be heavily grazed by stock. Buffalo grass is palatable and nutritious to all classes of livestock. It will stand extremes of drought and very heavy grazing. Buffalo grass cures in the fall and makes good, nutritious winter forage. It spreads by vigorous runners, though it needs surface moisture for the stolons, or runners, to develop roots. Its seed production is light, except in favorable seasons.

My father and Uncle Will agreed that this account of the great buffalo grass accorded with their findings, based on more than 60 years of observation. Uncle Will asked me if the bulletin told anything about the "blue-joint," which, in seasons of sufficient rainfall, grew higher than an Indian pony's head. I found an account under the name of "Big Bluestem (Andropogon furcatus)," which described the Dakota grass called "Bluejoint." The bulletin stated:

> Big bluestem is the dominant native perennial grass in the bottom land type of pasture. Originally, big bluestem was the principal grass in the richer prairies of Eastern Dakota, now all under cultivation.
>
> Big bluestem is very palatable and nutritious in its earlier stages of growth, and the protein content is about 14 percent. In September, when the crude fibre has increased, and the grass has matured, the fibre is about 33 1/3 percent.
>
> Big bluestem is a sod grass, spreading by root stocks which greatly add to its ability to withstand grazing, and to its value as a pasture plant. The fact that it does not joint and mature seed until late summer makes it especially valuable for supply forage during the summer months.
>
> The root system of the big bluestem is rather coarse, and consequently not so drought-resistant [as buffalo grass]. Late spring freezes may check the growth of this grass, but, even so, it usually makes a good growth in May and June. The roots have a working depth of from 5 to 8 feet. It begins flowering in August and continues until frost. It will stand close grazing.

My father and Uncle Will were delighted with this description. My father remarked that this big bluestem, or blue-joint, as it was invariably called in Dakota, was the grass that gave the prairie fire the fuel which enabled it to out-travel a racehorse, when driven by a high wind. He remarked that he had seen the prairie fire jump 40 rods of "braking," which the pioneers had depended on as a secure fire-break. Uncle Will remarked that no fire-breaks could be depended on to stop a prairie fire driven by a Dakota fall wind, and that the only safety lay in a "back-fire." The mysteries of the back-fire were fully explained for some young visitors. I had had the good fortune to see Uncle Will and Uncle John Rei with their crews set the back-fires which saved the Prairie Queen section "improvements," which consisted of dwelling house, stables for 100 horses, a corn crib, and granaries holding 40,000 bushels of small grain (wheat, rye, barley, oats and flax). The technique of the back-fire consisted in stepping off 20 rods from the fire-break, in the direction from which the wind was blowing. There the fire was started, and the wind blew it, of course, toward the fire-break, where it was stopped, not having gained much momentum in the short distance. The burned space was consecutively increased by new back-fires. A crew of men stood ready, with soaking gunnysacks, to snuff out any brands which might escape and start a fire inside the area protected by the fire-break. By the time the raging prairie fire was at hand, Uncle Will and Uncle John had a fire-break 160 rods wide. However, the voracious prairie fire snuffed out the beautiful grove which had taken 15 years, from 1873 to 1888, to develop, and which was one of the show places of the Sioux valley, containing, as it did, 20 acres of fine shade trees.

My father then asked me if the bulletin contained any description of the short blue grass which grew in bunches, but did not reach the height of the ordinary blue-joint. I found a description of red bunch grass, which he identified as the "Little Blue-joint." It read:

> Little Bluestem (Andropogon scoparius) is a bunch grass having a fine, very much divided root system, making it well adapted to absorb moisture in relatively dry soil. It is a dominant upland grass. It has about the

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same growth habits and feeding value as big bluestem. Considerable seed is produced in years when favorable growing conditions prevail. After the seedling is established it tillers profusely, soon forming a large bunch.

Uncle Will said there was another grass which still grew along the railroad right-of-way, and could stand a burning summer drought, which he called "plume grass," on account of its plumy head, but that stock did not care for it, and would only eat it in times of excessively dry weather when the pastures were burned up.

"Well," my father said, "it was a great mistake to break up all of Dakota. I believe it would have been better if the government had made it a condition of homestead entry, that only half of the land should be broken. Of course, hindsight is always better than foresight. But, poor Dakota—when I remember the great days, the wonderful hay crops—the harvest—when wheat went 30 bushels to the acre, in the '70's—the tremendous vegetable crops. Why, in the Chicago restaurants when I used to take a trainload of cattle up there, they would advertise that they were serving Dakota potatoes. Well, you can all imagine what a heart breaker this terrible season is. I have seen the days of the blizzard, and the prairie fire, and the drought and the grasshopper, but this beats it all for disaster. I wonder how the poor people will survive and manage to hold their land. Perhaps it is just as well that I am going to turn in my checks this summer, and won't be here to see the fall."

My father did not live to see that fall, nor even the summer through, but about the time the bluegrass would ordinarily have been making its best growth, he went to his appointed place, and we buried him under Dakota sod.

Only the actions of the just,
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

End of Ploughing-Under, II

What the future holds for American agriculture.

By **T. Swann Harding**

THE UNITED STATES entered the earlier phase of the Great World War in 1917 with agriculture unplanned and unorganized. The slogan "Food will win the war" was adopted. Under the Food Administration food was organized. But agriculture simply went out to produce in disorderly and unplanned fashion. Fortunately for us food did win the war, but we produced huge quantities of some farm commodities that we did not need, we failed to produce others that we urgently needed, soil and water resources were despoiled and speculation was rampant.

When the Great World War again flamed into universal violence in 1939, after an armistice for diplomatic pressure and economic penetration lasting from 1918 until the Japanese attack in Manchuria which reopened the military phase, agriculture in the United States was well organized. The Department of Agriculture was its planning agency and board of strategy. An adjustment mechanism existed by means of which it was possible to increase or decrease the production of specific crops as need arose.

Agriculture was locally organized by means of democratically elected committees of farmers. These more than 130,000 committeemen were tied directly to state and thereby to national officialdom. These were first agricultural adjustment, later defense, and now may as well be thought of as war boards. Farmers therefore participated in their own control, made their own plans—with scientific and professional advice and guidance. Thus they adapted themselves to life in the modern industrial world.

Meanwhile there were devices for storing under loan surplus non-perishable crops unexpectedly rising beyond predetermined goals. There was also provision for insecure farmers and for both farm and city reliefers. Sometimes production, sometimes consumption, had to be subsidized, but the function of providing food was well performed. At the same time water resources had been improved and soil riches had been preserved and enhanced. Then came war again and the blacking out of our export market. This brings us to January, 1941.

We faced agricultural abundance, it appeared. There were two million bushels of wheat in the world for which no market existed. There was a world stock of fifty million bales of cotton and the world consumed only twenty-five million annually. There was no market for much of our tobacco. Twenty million Americans could spend only five cents per person per meal for food. What should be done?

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The Secretary of Agriculture declared that our export market, our frontier, was right here. All our people must be well-fed, well-clothed, well-housed. That was the obligation of our society as a whole. We must use the same ingenuity in finding new methods of distribution and new means to stimulate consumption that we had in developing production. The gap between our capacity to produce and our ability to distribute and consume must be bridged. But within three months the picture had changed entirely.

For England

The corrosive nazi tide which swept over Western Europe deprived Great Britain of important sources of food in Denmark and Holland. British food consumption dropped to 27 percent below normal. Most of her food had to be shipped a long way and the high seas were submarine-infested. If Britain was to be our bulwark against the nazis, we must prepare ourselves to provide animal protein food for one-quarter of the people in the United Kingdom.

Whereas we thought we had too much of everything we suddenly found that we did not have enough milk, eggs, chickens, pork, lard, fruits and vegetables to do this emergency job. Here was our export market, subsidized by lend-lease funds, ultimately to the extent of one and one-half billion dollars. England did not want our wheat, cotton and tobacco; she wanted us to turn our feed grains, of which we had huge quantities stored, into meat, eggs and milk. Germany was using deprivation of food as an instrument of policy; we must use the provision of food to defeat her.

Moreover the realization now became acute that a full defense program must provide for the needs of our own millions who had never had an adequate diet. But no inefficient, uneconomic farm production was called for. We must produce predetermined quantities of specific, selected foods—agricultural adjustment on a mass scale. We must also teach Southern farmers to produce more of their own food, for in 1940 one-fifth of the 2½ million farms in 10 southern states lacked home gardens, 616,000 had no milk cows, 721,000 had no hogs and 418,000 actually didn't have a hen!

We must be better nourished to become harder, more efficient, better able to work overtime. We must hook scientific knowledge up with the urgent needs of the common people. We must quit trying to educate underfed children, starving the generation of tomorrow which must make a new world, if one is to be made.

The British wanted cheese in abundance, and in June, 1941, the suggestion was made that we diminish our cheese consumption to provide it for them. At least we must no longer fear an abundance of agricultural commodities. We must build up our farm plant to aid Britain and to make Americans happier and healthier as well. All this culminated with an announcement of food-for-freedom goals made on September 8, 1941. These goals were set up for 1942 farm production. They were based on the needs of Britain and on the requirement for feeding our own people scientifically.

Contact would be made with dirt farmers through the thousands of local committeemen and they would be signed up through the regular adjustment machinery of the Department. British needs would equal about 8 to 10 percent of our farm production though the 25-27½ million acres of cropland normally used for export production would be sufficient. The hills and dales need not be plowed up; reserves of feed grains made it unnecessary to increase crop acreage greatly. The bad after-effects of the 1917-18 hostilities need not recur.

Planning to produce more

We deliberately planed to produce more hogs and lard, more evaporated and dry skim milk, more eggs and more cheese. Our total farm production for 1942 was set at about 15 percent more than the 1924-29 average. While we would ship huge quantities of food to Great Britain, we should also produce enough the better to feed ourselves. The adjustment machinery would for the first time be applied to all important commodities. Agricultural defense boards in each county would bring all farm programs to focus on food for freedom.

The Secretary of Agriculture announced that American food would be a fifth column worth ten field armies. Consumers would be protected by the release of commodities stored under loan, if speculation started in food prices. In any case the anticipated production of abundance would be the best possible guarantee of fair consumer prices. Moreover, since so many Americans were underfed, it would be both salutary and anti-inflationary for them to have more food to buy.

Farmers also would be protected. Prices of feed grains, hogs, eggs, evaporated and dry skim milk, cheese and chickens would be supported till December 31, 1942, at not less than 85 percent of parity. It is well to remember also that when you pay 25 cents more for a cotton shirt, only 5 cents of that goes for cotton and that the cotton grower receives even less than that. The farmer also gets only a fraction of a cent more for the wheat that goes into a higher priced loaf of bread.

The food to be shipped to Britain under the original 1942 production goals was gargantuan in amount—enough to fill a freight train 2,359 miles long. We must send sufficient milk or its equivalent to fill a pipe half a foot thick reaching

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around the earth three times at the Equator—5 billion pounds. We must send half a billion dozen eggs which would fill enough dozen cartons to reach four times around the earth at the Equator.

We must send sufficient canned poultry to fill 5 miles of railway cars, enough fresh fruit to fill a freight train reaching from New York to Chicago and enough canned vegetables to fill 22 miles of railway cars. We must also send 1.5 billion pounds of pork and lard. That would require sufficient 230-pound hogs, standing behind one another, with 1½ feet between, to reach from the northernmost tip of North America to the southernmost of South America. We must send also smaller quantities of other foods. If anything these goals will be raised rather than lowered later, for we may have to send some food to Russia, China, Free France, the Netherlands Indies and more to Britain.

Viewed as actual increases in farm production the 1942 goals do not seem so gigantic. Our production of wheat will be curtailed 15 percent and there will be no increases in corn, cotton, tobacco or rice. But pork and lard production must be increased 12 percent, beef and veal marketings 10 percent, chickens 13, eggs 10, milk 7, and lamb and mutton 2 percent. While it was originally intended to increase peanut production 77 and soybean 16 percent, these goals will doubtless be raised now since Japan's attack menaces our supply of palm and cocoanut oils. We must also seek other sources of hard fibers for ropes.

Milk

We may take milk as an example to indicate what will be required. During the 1930's we produced about 106 billion pounds a year. But 1940, a record year for farm production, stepped this up to 111 billion pounds, while 117 billion pounds is the expected 1941 output. The 1942 production goal is 125 billion pounds of which the British are to get 5 or 5½. However, if all Americans had a best-adapted diet we ourselves would require 140 billion pounds of milk annually. Thus we are providing an additional 3 billion pounds of milk for ourselves in 1942, but to get our needful quota we have 20 billion pounds more to go.

True we are shipping a quarter of a billion tons of food monthly to Britain now. Russia may later want some of our wheat. We have huge reserves of feed grain in the ever-normal granary so stepping up milk and hog production should be easy. But the farmer faces an acute scarcity of labor, equipment, fertilizers and insecticides, and must steel himself to use the greatest ingenuity to produce his quota.

Incidentally it should be said that, contrary to the ideas so freely bandied about, Japan is well supplied with food. The Japanese live mainly on rice, wheat and fish and are amply stocked. Reports of rice shortages during the past 2 years were in part pure propaganda and in part represented efforts to accustom the people to rationing. Japan draws upon Korea, Formosa and China for supplies, and she is reducing her mulberry tree acreage 250,000 acres to plant this in wheat, barley and vegetables. Her wheat harvest in Manchukuo was excellent last year. Japan cannot be starved into submission.

Organization

After the treacherous attack upon the United States by her long-time Oriental friend, we realized at long last that the Axis won its victories because of superior organization. We too must organize to win. By December 17 the 135,000 farm committeemen had visited their neighbors and signed them up for the 1942 production goals. The results are being tabulated now. But this must be carefully controlled production. It would be just as unwise and just as wasteful to permit farmers to produce what it best pleased them to produce as it would to permit manufacturers to do so.

In a military economy industry must produce that which is required to win—tanks, shells, bombs, ammunition, planes, ships. So also must agriculture. We need more milk, eggs, pork; we need more fruits, vegetables, and oil crops—though the former two can be increased by avoiding wastage and rendering marketing more efficient. Agricultural production also must be planned in terms of grand strategy. Just that is being done.

We shall use our farm plant scientifically the better to feed our own people as well as to plug the gaps in our allies' supplies. The Government specialists will advise farmers as to what is required. State and county defense boards will henceforth be regarded as farm war boards. Farmers will be helped just as much as possible over shortages of labor, machinery, fertilizers and insecticides.

Nor shall we this time win the war and lose the peace. Definite plans are being made right now to prevent that. For one thing we shall gradually step our agricultural plant capacity up until it can meet the requirements of all American citizens for food and fiber crops. We shall regard the provision of basic necessities as the citizen's right under a democracy after peace comes. Officials of the Department of Agriculture, as well as the Secretary of the Treasury, are on record as to that.

Pattern of a future

Even Geoffrey Crowther, editor of the good old Tory London *Economist,* which represents the conservative capitalistic element in Britain, has

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written: "The citizen of a democracy should be guaranteed, as of right, enough food to maintain him in health. He should be assured of a minimum standard of shelter, clothing and fuel. He should be given full and equal opportunities of education. He should have leisure and facilities for enjoying it. He should be secured against the risks of unemployment, ill health and old age."

Our vision

Just that also is our vision. It is our determination after the war to operate our industrial and our agricultural plant equipment at full capacity and full employment, and to learn to distribute the wealth so produced to all who require it. At first, and during the transition from a military to a peacetime economy, we shall retain our surplus-disposal and consumer-subsidy devices to stimulate consumption. Gradually, however, the national income will rise permanently to the region of $100-110 billions. Then all but a small residue of permanently unemployable persons can pay their own way.

The plans now being made contemplate public works to build up and further conserve natural resources—reforestation, soil and water conservation, flood control, development of water facilities, range improvement, etc. They include addition housing, medical care, electrification, educational and library facilities, and better markets for rural people. At the same time industrial decentralization and the distribution of farm products via the school-lunch, cheap-milk and food-stamp plans will continue.

Industry like agriculture may be planned and placed under rational scientific control. This will include guarantees similar to those now invoked in agriculture. Production quotas will be planned and alloted, so as to guarantee full output and employment, the Government undertaking to purchase all surplus industrial stocks, as it does surplus farm stocks. For these goods that farmers and manufacturers cannot market, government will pay predetermined nonquota prices.

Money will be channeled into rural development; railways, highways, airways and river navigation will be further modernized. New power projects will be undertaken. The nation will learn to consume all that its industrial and farm plants are capable of producing when run to capacity. A national planning board, assisted by such local advisory committees as are required, will fix farm and industrial production, employing quotas based on past records. Only thus can the national income be increased and democracy come into its heritage.

Such are the plans now being worked upon in these dark days. May their existence and the promise of their realization shed a ray of hope throughout the long years of warfare ahead of us!

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE LATEST NEWS emanating from the Bishops' Committee on the Pope's Peace Points, about which this column already has spoken several times, contains encouraging information. It makes known that a manual, with a special preface, is being prepared and will soon be issued, "presenting a concise interpretation of the papal peace program. This preface will be a general statement which will comprehend the main points of all the papal pronouncements and give a clear-cut definition of the Committee's undertaking, serving as an interpretation of all its efforts."

It is quite certain that in the waging—and, it is hoped, the winning—of the war, the United States must play the major part. In that mighty task American Catholics undoubtedly will fully accomplish their duties, in all the ways made necessary by total war, in full unity with their fellow citizens of other forms of religious faith. And in the mighty efforts that are manifestly needed to follow military victory with a just peace, it is equally necessary that the American Catholic task be likewise a collaborative one. Without any sacrifice of our principles—on the contrary, by strict yet most practical application of such principles—we must yet convince non-Catholics, the vast majority of whom are ignorant of the universal, non-sectarian character of the papal principles, that what the Church teaches in this matter is a doctrine in which all men of good will may freely cooperate. The English Catholics, through the Sword of the Spirit and other organizations, and through their press, have already put such spiritual and moral cooperation with their non-Catholic fellow citizens into vigorous and fruitful effort. It is to be hoped that a similar movement will grow and flourish on this side of the Atlantic.

How irresistible is the appeal which the eternal principles of justice, on which the law of nations as taught by the Church is based, makes to minds and souls of men yearning for justice to prevail among nations and communities and individuals, when they come to know about it, is strikingly illustrated in the remarkable story of David Urquhart, whose biography, by Gertrude Robinson, was published in Boston by the Houghton Mifflin Company in 1920. It is a book which should be revived; or, at least, widely popularized, at the present time. It is the spiritual portrait of one of the most extraordinary men of modern times.

Born (in 1805) to the chieftainship of a Scottish clan, David Urquhart was taken to the continent of Europe as a child by his intensely pious, Evangelical mother, and educated privately in Switzerland, France and Italy. Throughout his long life of unremitting work and travel as a diplomat, author, public speaker, but above all, as a teacher of other men, he remained a Protestant Christian, who made himself an apostle of justice and the moral law. As a writer, no man, not even Ruskin or Carlyle, was more keenly aware of the disastrous course which the

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European nations and peoples were pursuing, even at the time when mighty commercial empires were apparently reaping harvests of wealth and material power in the wake of the industrial revolution. He foresaw more clearly than most of the disregarded prophets of the nineteenth century the black and bloody plague of revolutions and wars, both civil and international, which now have culminated in the most universal of all human catastrophes.

Midway in his career, after having first been a man of the greatest influence with his own government, and then being repudiated and driven from public office because of his opinions, which might be summed up in the fact that he believed all European governments without exception were misguiding their peoples, because all alike had openly or tacitly repudiated the guidance of the moral law of nations, Urquhart himself discovered that the Catholic Church had formulated the law of nations more perfectly than any other organization. Thenceforward, he devoted himself unremittingly to many efforts to obtain the leadership of the Pope, and the cooperation of all nations and classes of mankind, in the proclamation, teaching and practical application of the law of nations.

Protestant as he was, and remained, he personally obtained the signatures of more than a hundred Catholic bishops to a petition to the Pope—Pius IX—to bring the subject of the law of nations before the Vatican Council. He led a body of English Catholics who similarly petitioned the Holy Father.

The plan proposed by David Urquhart was actually accepted and placed upon the agenda of the Vatican Council, but, alas, one of the first of the great wars which broke out, even as Urquhart had predicted—the Franco-Prussian War of 1870—brought an abrupt end to the great council on which such hopes had been reposed, before it could take up the all-important subject of the proposed restoration of the law of nations. The anarchy of nations prevailed, instead of the moral law. That condition of inner anarchy was long disguised by the outward show of wealth and scientific and commercial "progress," by the expansion of materialistic success, envied yet sedulously aped by weaker nations than those that led the van; yet anarchy it truly was, because of the repudiation of a universal moral law in matters of state, and, too often, in the conduct of commercial affairs. Moral laws were relegated, in practice, even when respected outwardly, to private affairs, and private life. Men of the strictest personal honor in private life disregarded all moral laws in their conduct as public leaders, and excused themselves on the plea of "national necessity," of "reasons of state."

Well, it has all worked out as David Urquhart foresaw. Now the Church toward which he turned more than half a century ago is again begging statesmen, educators, public leaders and the peoples themselves, to restore that without which all other plans of social, national and international restoration are vain fables, deceptive utopias, or tyrannies—the law of nations, the immutable moral law as revealed by Almighty God and taught through God's Church.

But the children of God's Church must not themselves be sectarian, or exclusive. Even as Pope Pius IX accepted most gladly the cooperation of the Scottish Protestant, David Urquhart, and as many non-Catholics of that time most gladly followed Urquhart in such cooperation, the Catholic peace program of today, to be more than a vain dream, requires the widest and broadest and most practical forms of cooperation with all men and women of good will outside the visible membership of the Catholic Church. One of the text books of that collaboration ought to be the biography of David Urquhart.

Communications

THE WAR

Jacksonville, Fla.

TO the Editors: Far be it from me to doubt Russian successes and the difficult condition of German arms. But I consider it essential that they be evaluated within the complete framework of the war without excessive optimism, indeed with cautious reservations. It is possible that the current interpretation of a major German setback all along the front is the correct one, but it may also be that the Germans, having imprudently postponed a retreat to a safer winter line, are now only subjected to pressure by the Russians, who at certain points may conceivably have penetrated the enemy's defense zone. Without basing ourselves on inconsistent hopes, we can well appreciate the importance of the present Russian offensive, since it compels Hitler to fight on the Eastern front without the possibility of moving on speedily toward other objectives, or at least without the possibility of shifting from the Russian front a substantial part of his air force or panzer divisions. This is an enormous advantage.

But it must be foreseen that Hitler is getting ready for the spring. He will be forced to engage the Russians in a mortal duel as soon as climatic and terrain conditions and the completeness of his military preparations will allow it. He must, on the other hand, foresee the possible further strengthening of the Russian offensive in the spring. Hence the necessity of creating defenses both in Poland and on German soil. The *démentis* issued in this connection are worthless. Hitler is forced by present events to do these things, and he is concealing them behind that heavy veil of mystery in which all the totalitarian governments enshroud their plans (witness Japan).

That Russia is in a position to resist a full offensive in the spring is not a matter of course. What might happen is a prolonged war of attrition with relatively small changes of the front in either direction until either combatant shows signs of exhaustion. But it is idle to prophesy. In the spring we will see the results of what today both belligerents are preparing. The United States and England know full well what their duty is, today and not tomorrow, since the Russian front is *today* the main and most dangerous front for both of them.

As this point I would like to suggest that credit should not be given to the rumors of internal collapse and deep-rooted dissensions in Germany and of the possibility of eliminating Hitler and of presentation to the world of the "benign" countenance of his generals. I think that

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such tidbits of news originate from nazi sources, together with their *démentis* (meant for domestic consumption), in order to bring about again in America and in England that state of uncertainty which from time to time seizes the conservative groups, forever on the alert and unwilling to see the Russians win too much. These are the groups who would prefer internal collapse in Germany, followed by agreement with the generals, to Russian victory.

This is a game which the nazis play better than anybody else, and they have used it for their purposes several times.

For a sane war psychology we must face the realities of an obscure and difficult situation. The war will be long, the surprises will be many and many the disillusionments, before reaching that decisive point at which victory will be within our certain grasp.

Today all fronts are dangerous: the Russian, the Mediterranean, and the two ocean fronts of the Atlantic and the Pacific. This is the picture which steels the wills and leads to the development of a "psychology of time of war in zone of war," even among peoples like the American who had not considered, up to this day, the United States as being a "zone of war." LUIGI STURZO.

A WOMAN WRAPPED IN SILENCE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: It may be of some interest to your readers to present an alternative point of view regarding "A Woman Wrapped in Silence" to that expressed by John Gilland Brunini in THE COMMONWEAL for December 26, 1941.

I am informed that this poem is receiving widespread and enthusiastic praise in spite of the tepid approval given to it by the majority of Catholic critics.

In a column syndicated in the Catholic press, John J. O'Connor and myself stated that a poem has been written here and now that surpasses anything that has been written in Catholic literature for over a century (omit Gerard Manley Hopkins, please).

Many have rallied to our stand in our "Literary Cavalcade" column. A leading letter in the *Tablet* for December 27, 1941, states: "I have read innumerable book reviews in the past few weeks seeking confirmation of my own immediate judgment that Father Lynch's epic is fraught with the rare essence of literary immortaltiy and destined to endure. Strangely, unaccountably, your column mkaes the first worthy acknowledgment that I have discovered."

Father Kennedy devotes two columns to the poem in the Hartford *Catholic Transcript* for January 1, 1942. He says: "And among the small army of contemporary writers of Catholic 'poetry,' Father Lynch stands in solitary radiance, a poet. He has written a magnificent Catholic poem not because he is a Catholic but because he is both a Catholic *and* a poet."

I submit, therefore, to the editors and readers of THE COMMONWEAL this proposition: that if any of us can *possibly* be right, the columns of your periodical should be thrown open for a thorough discussion and sifting of the criticism that Father Lynch has received. What if, after all, his poem *is* the poem of the century?

It seems to me that the weaknesses of the criticism to which "A Woman Wrapped in Silence" has been subjected arise from the fact, first of all, that in some cases Father Lynch has been criticized on technical grounds rather than on the larger and more comprehensive grounds of first class criticism. It is comparatively easy to have *a priori* conceptions of what a poem should look and sound like. Such conceptions are apt to be too highly personal to be examinable.

For example, Mr. Brunini cites lines as *typical* of Father Lynch's "lofty prose"; immediately thereafter he refers to these typical lines as "rhetorically bad prose." Apparently Mr. Brunini has a very definite sense of what constitutes poetry which he has not succeeded in conveying to the public at large. Father Lynch is writing prose, prose that is simultaneously "lofty" and "rhetorically bad."

In *Spirit* for January, 1942, another friend, Dr. Frank Connolly, bestows the accolade of strenuous mediocrity on Father Lynch's work. Apparently he follows Mr. Brunini in his conception of Father Lynch's "rhetorical style." I submit that the lines that Dr. Connolly quotes do not meet any normal conception of rhetoric. Katherine Brégy in the *Catholic World,* December, 1941, points out that "there are, alas, not many words in Father Lynch's pages which so twinkle . . . [like Sirius on a frosty night.]" I submit that these criticisms do not even do justice to their authors, that they lack fullness and maturity of insight. They are too personal, they lack objectivity.

But putting technical considerations to one side, I think that, in the second place, a gross injustice has been done to Father Lynch's work by putting forth a principle of criticism that is basically unsound. As Mr. Brunini states it, "His (Father Lynch's) salient purpose is to 'humanize' the Holy Family, one which involves seriously the question of taste."

I contend that this is a generalization which points to certain shortcomings in *Spirit* as a publication. It tends to depart into a Platonic world of spirit, and shy away from the human. Christ died for humanity; Our Lady was human; St. Joseph was human. The Holy Family was human, and it would be as non-Catholic for an artist to ignore the sacramental humanity of the Holy Family as it would be to ignore the fact that Christ was God. In fact, it is the peculiar genius of Father John Lynch that he understands being and humanity in the Thomistic sense of these words. As we stated, "It is this kind of understanding that enables the poet to apprehend the hand of God who has made humanity most deeply human by making it Godlike." Father Lynch neither "humanizes" nor "spiritualizes" the Holy Family. He presents it.

WILLIAM J. GRACE.

PRAYING IN WAR TIME

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Mrs. Claire Huchet Bishop, in her letter to THE COMMONWEAL of December 26, asks about the existence of the small groups of whom Father Orchard spoke in his article, "Praying in War Time."

"First small groups, then the church as a whole, and

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at last the world, may turn and cry for forgiveness, mercy and deliverance for all."

We, the Association of Catholic Conscientious Objectors, would be very glad to have her, and any others interested in praying for peace, join us. Perhaps they can join our present schedule of prayer and we can all pray together for a "Peace without Victory."

Each morning, just before seven o'clock, we read the proper of the Mass for the day and spend about fifteen minutes in meditation. Each evening at about seven we read from one of the spiritual writers (Saint Augustine, Saint Francis de Sales, Cardinal Newman), then we recite Compline together and read the Oration from the Mass for Peace.

Let us "turn to prayer as the only hope for mankind in this dreadful hour."

DWIGHT E. LARROWE, *Director,*
Civilian Public Service Camp No. 15,
Stoddard, New Hampshire.

THE WAR

Alexandria, Virginia.

TO the Editors: Dutch guns have been speaking so eloquently for the people of the Netherlands Empire, as well as their allies, ever since the Japanese attack, that I have debated replying to the letter of Austin J. App which appeared in your distinguished publication on November 28.

I do believe, however, that Mr. App's statements should in all fairness be refuted because the facts controvert not only his deductions but the source material he cites, namely, sections of the recent book, "That Day Alone," by Dutch-born but Canadian-citizen Pierre Van Paasen.

The statement that Holland's policy of neutrality was "illusionary" and that the nation had virtually lost its independence to the British Empire is sheer nonsense. First, the policy of neutrality gave the Dutch people more than a century of peace. Second, the record shows that during the last world war and in this one up to the time Holland was invaded by the nazis and became a belligerent, Netherlands statesmen were as vigilant in protecting the nation's neutrality against the English as they were against the Germans. The utterance of a former British prime minister that Britain's frontier "now is the Rhine" epitomized British policy regarding Western Europe, including The Netherlands along with Belgium and France.

As to the App-Van Paasen charge that the masses of Holland never had butter, meat only on Sunday and "one egg each year at Eastertime," one can cite Holland's social welfare program—long in advance of our own New Deal—which included not only old-age pensions, but unemployment benefits and even compulsory illness insurance. Moreover, during the period referred to the price of milk was 2.7 cents per 1.05 quart, placing that commodity well within the reach of all wage earners, and correspondingly low rates prevailed for other dairy and poultry products.

Final proof, I think, may be found in the official figures on infant mortality which reveal hygenic and nutritional improvements which reduced deaths from 21.1 per thousand in 1875 to 3.4 per thousand in 1939.

WILLIAM KROGER.

GABRIELA MISTRAL

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editors: I want to congratulate you for publishing in THE COMMONWEAL for December 5, 1941, the very illuminating article on Gabriela Mistral by Clarence Finlayson. It ought to be required reading for every North American. For to know the prose and poetry of Gabriela Mistral is to love all manking immeasurably more.

Mr. Finlayson states that Gabriela Mistral is the greatest figure is Hispanic American culture today, which is unquestionably true, but she is that and a great deal more. I found in my conversations with innumerable Latin Americans in many countries that she is above all a great spiritual force throughout the lands south of the Rio Grande. There is actually a cult of Gabriela Mistral that transcends, I believe, the total impact of all her writing. She towers over the southern continent as a great living symbol of infinite love and understanding between all men. Her voice is heard in the remotest Andean villages and, to all that hear it, it brings a deep inner glow and new courage.

Again and again, in country after country, these same questions were put to me: "Have you been with Gabriela Mistral? What does *she* think of the world today? What does *she* say we ought to do?" These questions give some idea of the tremendous faith the people of Hispanic America have in Gabriela Mistral. They reveal, too, something fundamental about those people, namely, that they have the greatest confidence in a poet—not in an efficiency expert or in a financial magnate—but in a poet.

In these days, when so much is being said, and something being done, about the cultural interchange between the Americas, is it not well to point out the supreme importance given to spiritual values by the other Americans? I can think of no better way of doing that than by making known the life and work of Gabriela Mistral to the people of the United States, which is precisely what Clarence Finlayson has so admirably done in his article in THE COMMONWEAL.

EDITH F. HELMAN.

The Stage & Screen

In Time to Come

IN A SENSE, Woodrow Wilson is not the hero of "In Time to Come," but its villain. The real hero is the League of Nations, and Howard Koch and John Huston have shown in their eloquent play that the League's failure must be blamed to a considerable extent upon certain shortcomings in the personality of its creator. Wilson lacked tact and social address; he was short-

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tempered, impatient of criticism, mistrustful even of his best wishers. Worst of all, despising compromise and politics, he however allowed himself at the Paris peace conference to be drawn into bargaining disastrous concessions against support of his League, signing a Treaty which virtually negated the League.

And yet, had Wilson been otherwise, would he have been capable of conceiving the League and the Fourteen Points? Idealism is by nature single-tracked. Here is the tragic dilemma: to have succeeded, Wilson must have been a politician; yet a politician's mind would never have invented a plan which placed good will above expediency.

It's impossible to gauge how much "In Time to Come" owes its impact to its script, and how much to its compelling timeliness. The authors have wisely confined themselves to an episodic chronicle of events, letting the morning headlines point their moral. Public figures so near us in time, many of them still alive, are dangerous material, but the characters of "In Time to Come" are believable and for the most part unexpectedly objective. Senator Lodge, for example, is given the opportunity to voice his isolationist opposition with persuasive eloquence. Colonel House and Tumulty are presented as true friends who deserved better treatment from their President. And even the allied diplomats whose national rivalries doomed Wilson's aspirations are shown not as ogres but as hard-headed patriots. The acting of all these parts is persuasive, and Richard Gaines acquits himself with dignity and distinction in the difficult rôle of Wilson. *(At the Mansfield.)*

Papa Is All

LAST WEEK "The First Crocus" examined the folkways of Minnesota Norwegians; this week, we're introduced to the Pennsylvania Dutch. In place of an interfering mother, we have a father who lays about with a whip; in place of *j's* that are *y's*, we have *v's* that are *w's*.

Also, in place of sympathetic comedy we have farce. That is to say, where "The First Crocus" attempted a veracious study of folk customs and rural character, "Papa Is All" builds for laughs. When I point out that the laughs are principally of the comic-strip variety, I don't mean to condemn but simply to describe. The chief source of comedy is the engaging dialect prevailing in and about Lancaster, Pa. "Behind Papa was all," for example, means after Papa died. Most logically, questions are indicated by a final "ain't?" and verbs and prepositions appear always where least expected. As for the plot, suffice to say that in the end Papa gets his just due, Mama gets her front-door bell, and daughter gets her "surweyor."

The Theater Guild has mounted Patterson Greene's play with its customary skill and taste. The small cast headed by Jessie Royce Landis is polished and adept, and Emeline Roche's kitchen setting is handsomely authentic. *(At the Guild.)*

Casualties

TWO of last week's plays promptly shut up shop after a look at their newspaper notices. "Johnny on a Spot" was a Charles MacArthur farce about Southern politics. It tried to recapture the haywire hilarity of

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"The Front Page" and "Twentieth Century," upon which Mr. MacArthur collaborated with Ben Hecht, but the result was frantic confusion. Keenan Wynn and Edith Atwater were the chief athletes among the enormous cast of grafters and forgers and cops and reporters and trollops.

For most of its first act, "The Lady Comes Across" was high-spirited, imaginative entertainment. Evelyn Wyckoff, an unknown enlisted at the last moment to substitute in the lead, came through handsomely. She acts and sings with assurance and charm. Her style is manneristic, but her mannerisms suit the musical-comedy medium, and she has the looks and youth to carry them off. Joe E. Lewis (courtesy of the Copacabana) was allowed to step out of his part long enough to disarm the audience with a wistful song about February. Several other hummable tunes were bunched toward the beginning, and sinister hooded figures with umbrellas danced an effective surrealist ballet. The four Martins harmonized catchily.

But during the intermission, someone must have advised the authors that a musical comedy requires a few shovelfuls of routine bedroom humor. And George Balanchine proceeded to apologize for his talent with a series of inept ballet burlesques. Large-scale musicals invariably include at least one of these, but I have never been able to discover for whose taste. Mischa Auer was throughout a major disappointment to those of us who admire him on the screen, and Wynn Murray should never have sacrifiecd her best forty pounds. DAVID BURNHAM.

Educational and Inspirational

FINALLY a film on the Holy Mass has been produced to which Catholics can take their non-Catholic friends without distressing qualms. Presented by the Servite Fathers, produced in Chicago under the supervision of the Perpetual Novena in Honor of Our Sorrowful Mother with the Reverend Hugh Calkins, O.S.M., in charge of production, *"The Eternal Gift"* is an expert film of beauty. As the Solemn High Mass of Easter Sunday is sung, with the Reverend James R. Keane, O.S.M., as celebrant, the Right Reverend Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen explains step by step what is taking place on the altar. Sometimes in commentary fashion, frequently using translations of the Ordinary and Proper, Monsignor Sheen's simple but explicit narration makes clear the meaning and much of the symbolism of the unbloody Sacrifice. The film has been expertly directed. Unusual shots of the celebrant and deacons throughout the entire Mass permit the audience to see at all times what they are doing, and thus offer an excellent opportunity to observe their procedure at close range. With the Chicago Symphony Orchestra rendering the score of the Mass of Christ the King, the singing of the Schola Cantorum and the majestic cadence of the Gregorian chanters, all under the direction of the Reverend Edwin V. Hoover, the music does much to heighten the impressive beauty of this inspiring spectacle. As the Credo is sung, an English translation of the Creed is superimposed over shots of the singing choristers. Perhaps some critics would prefer the film's not using hymns or orchestral accompaniment extraneous to the Mass, which is in itself a complete unity, or that Monsignor Sheen would have used the actual words of the Missal during the consecration instead of the commentary in which his voice trembles with emotion; but all must agree that the producers merit thankful approval for making no attempt to visualize scenes from the life of Christ with living figures. Instead, several views of pictures and the Stations are shown with good taste as we look back to Calvary during the Mass. We reiterate with Archbishop Stritch who endorses the film: "May it bring many souls to God."

Most of the recent war-time shorts have been interesting, informative and valuable for their timeliness; many of them are of a high quality. The Museum of Modern Art's series from England points out what citizens should and should not do in this modern warfare that has turned cities into battlefields. These excellent shorts include instructions on how to fight fires and put out incendiary bombs; they show the training of bobbies and civilian defense groups in special war courses and in action during an air raid. One little item with a droll, English sense of humor indicates how a Mr. Proudfoot invited disaster by not observing the blackout. A fine musical poster, done with gay color abstractions and lively music, warns: "Careful; the enemy is listening to you. Don't tell him anything." Most of these were produced by the British Ministry of Information. But American producers are on their toes too. Always alert, March of Time uses in its newest release, *"When Air Raids Strike,"* many sequences from these same English ARP (Air Raids Precautions) films. These include shots of the super-sensitive plane detectors and squadrons of fighter planes in action, scenes on the informing and drilling of civilians in defense work, and another very English comedy called "Goofer Trouble" (the results of which are not comic at all because goofers are the smartalecky dubs who, by not taking cover during an air raid, hinder the English fighter planes from getting the enemy). March of Time emphasizes the importance of these short films in educating the English and how Americans might learn much from Britain's experience. It would be a fine thing if the entire series now being shown at the Museum of Modern Art could be exhibited to all air raid wardens throughout this country.

It is to be hoped, however, that in making educational war-time shorts, American scriptwriters and producers will show some restraint to prevent any further heightening of our usual overconfidence or the complacency against which President Roosevelt warned. M-G-M has prepared a short documentary called *"Main Street on the March"* which indicates the change in attitude of Americans since May, 1940, when the present conflict was still called a "phony" war. Americans, now supposedly united by Pearl Harbor and the action of their great leaders, are moving fast to produce. "Rush" is now the theme song to make up for their former *laissez faire*. Universal gets blatantly boastful in its *"Cavalcade of the Air,"* but it has some good shots of the progress of airplanes in this country which was the first to fly. O.E.M. has brought out two instructive films: *"Women in Defense,"* for which Katherine Hepburn reads Eleanor Roosevelt's com-

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mentary, visualizes the fine work women are doing in science, industry and voluntary services; *"Bomber,"* with Carl Sandburg reciting his own commentary, shows first the material, then the parts, and then the assembling of a bomber that represents the American spirit and will defend our shores. One lesson our film-makers might learn from the British is best exhibited in the two-reeler, *"A Letter from Home."* Expertly directed by Carol Reed, this film depicts with calm understatement the women of England going about their everyday tasks, using their coupon books, making the best of the food shortages and substitutes, doing their bit by proudly keeping their heads in all emergencies.

But all the new documentary films are not about the war. The Cooperative League of USA wisely found time and money to make a 27-minute short to tell about its own important work. *"Here Is Tomorrow"* was produced by Documentary Film Productions under the direction of Willard Van Dyke and Herbert Kerkow; and while the problems and solutions of the Cooperatives proved somewhat difficult to dramatize, the film has done well in stating the purposes and ambitions of this consumer cooperative movement. To create action in a rather static script, the dramatized commentary is carried on by two men—Phil Brown as the college youth, bewildered and resentful in a world of insecurity and ruthless competition in both the personal and business fields, and Jabez Gray as the wise cooperative member who explains cooperatives and their effort to build a saner world. Well visualized is the start of the movement after the last war when the prohibitive price of fertilizers forced farmers to band together to buy and distribute justly without profit. The spreading movement now includes stores, factories, mines, service stations, mills, refineries, cafeterias, etc., in units that pass their savings on to their own consumers by expanding their buying power. Because people belong with other people and because cooperative methods have proved successful, the cooperative movement deserves more publicity than it is getting. "Here Is Tomorrow" is a good start in this direction.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Machines and Men

Mechanization and Culture. Walter John Marx. Herder. $2.00.

NOW THAT we have entered a war of continents, who can foresee the changes it will effect in our civilization? Will the industrialism that is one of the war's basic causes go down in the struggle as that struggle is protracted? With all emphasis on stepping up production—agricultural as well as industrial—is the breakdown of modern industrial capitalism that much more imminent? Would such a break-down lead to more highly centralized public ownership or more completely to some condition of anarchism and chaos analogous to what followed the fall of the Roman Empire? Not many readers will feel competent to answer this series of questions with any degree of assurance, but they are the questions that immediately underlie this stimulating study of the problem of the machine. The author himself makes the assumption that a domestic cataclysm is inevitable.

The bulk of his book is as damning a social criticism of man's use of the machine as this reviewer has encountered. Dr. Marx accomplishes this by piling up the evidence, citing dozens of authorities of widely varying weights, summarizing first-hand studies of specific situations. Using this documentary method, he demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt, for instance, that the introduction of labor-saving machinery does away with jobs which are *not* counterbalanced by employment in new industries.

At the same time the author wonders whether such universal leisure time activities as movies, roadhouses, radio and tabloids are to be preferred to longer work hours at manual labor as means of developing the creative faculties of the human spirit. Not that machines so much as unions are to be credited with securing shorter hours, for this volume straight through is an indictment of the use that has been made of the machine to date.

Even more scathing and convincing is the portion devoted to the evils resulting from the mechanization of American agriculture. Dustbowls and Okies and Arkies are easier to visualize, anyway, than their uprooted contemporaries of city streets. The author completes his indictment by marshalling evidence on the bad effects on people of mass-production methods and the general speed-up in daily life.

The most stimulating section of the book is a closely-packed twelve-page epilogue of advice to the reader. Although final page proofs must have been returned to the publishers well before Pearl Harbor, this advice assumes the state of chaos that inevitably follows long major wars. "In times of crisis, when everything is in flux, when men lose their security, we return to fundamentals, we begin to realize that if we have food and clothing we can weather almost any storm. But once the delicate machinery of modern culture breaks down, it becomes impossible for our overwhelmingly urban population to obtain these things. . . . We have much more need of versatility than for specialization. . . . For many a year, perhaps even for centuries, men will again be forced to turn their hands to everything from plowing to boat-building and housebuilding, from teaching their own

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children the heritage of past culture to operating a forge. . . . The thinker will recover the use of his hands."

Whatever the prospects for the future, few projects would be more satisfying than working toward that pioneer versatility which the author himself happens to embody. EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

FICTION

Mad Grandeur. Oliver St. John Gogarty. Lippincott. $2.75.

IN ONE of his poems, the late William Butler Yeats remarked that "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone, It's with O'Leary in the grave." Dr. Gogarty does his level best to reanimate the corpse in this curious novel of eighteenth century Ireland. One wonders if, by any chance, the author is executing a colossal spoof on the credulous Saxon public. The fictional Ireland he depicts is an exasperating compound of Charles Lever, Dion Boucicault, and Thackeray of the "Irish Sketch Book" and "Barry Lyndon"; a baroque paradise of lovely, daring women and iron-handed, brave men who wander about through the thinnest of narrative structures. An added reason for my own lifted eyebrow is the fact that I find a strong similarity between many of the incidents of the book and those traditional tales of derring-do which are common knowledge in Celtic households. Seemingly they are foisted into this tale for romantic effect. I refer to the young lady of quality who takes the jockey's place in the big race at the Curragh, and the account of the fight between the Irish and the English champions, among many others that might be cited.

This book is panoramic and scenic in form; the characters are flat against their background and seem to exist only as a foil for the background and as an excuse for the atmosphere. They neither grow nor advance. The episodic character of the narration keeps the reader's attention shuttling back and forth and destroys the narrative line. The language, however, is Augustan and exquisite, most effective in the passages of description.

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

LATIN AMERICA

Brazil in Capitals. Vera Kelsey. Harper. $3.50.

VERA KELSEY proved that she knew much about Brazil, and could write about it, in her "Seven Keys to Brazil," published a year and a half ago. But the subject, the country, grows more and more important in neighborly eyes. Miss Kelsey's new book, reworking her knowledge and experience and utilizing a lot that didn't fit in the earlier work, although not really as good for the home reader as the earlier one, is excellent. "Brazil in Capitals" is arranged and written as an intelligent guide for someone who is going there or is unusually interested in the country. All Brazil is here divided into twenty-eight cities, with an introduction, good notes and bibliography added. There are Rio de Janeiro, capitals of the twenty states, plus Olinda, Ouro Preto, Santos (once capitals themselves) and Petropolis, Poços de Caldas, Santarem and Therezopolis.

The way Brazil grew, the capitals embodied within themselves a very large proportion of the life of the *capitanias,* or provinces, or united states. This is still largely true, so much, indeed, that many of the capitals are called by their states' names and there is not overmuch distinction in the two meanings. Much of the dramatic interest in Brazil right now is that there the sweep west, the closing of the frontier, the rise of the hinterland is a current process. Some of the capitals are only recently created along very planned lines to function as centers of future expansion and direction. The inclusion of Santarem, the now small city at the junction of the Tapajóz and Amazon, is in the nature of a prophecy of Miss Kelsey, indicating great expectations which can be safely held about many points in interior Brazil. (The other three non-capitals are resorts.)

The author describes the cities as differing sharply from one another. There is climactic difference, functional difference, extreme variation in "modernity," historical and cultural difference. As a writer of guides, Miss Kelsey is particularly notable for giving relatively full and interesting historical background, and she is careful. The difference in "spirit" between the places has to come out more or less indirectly. The cultural achievements can be indicated by monuments. The chapter on the most important cities have brief divisions devoted to "The Vistor's Rio," "The Visitor's Baía," etc., which include descriptions of the churches, parks, schools, beaches and all such. There are a few pictures too, but for this day they are not impressive. The "Notes" are about fauna and flora, the art of the churches, the money and the weather. Brazil is a great nation which needs people. This book makes the reader want to be one of them, at least for a long visit. PHILIP BURNHAM.

BRIEFERS

Wild Geese and How to Chase Them. Charles Allen Smart. Random. $2.00.

THIS is not a handbook for the impounded citizen who enjoys slushing through the swamp with a shotgun, but a chatty book on everyday morality and the art of living. Although there are times when one thinks that the title might better be "Wild Oats and How to Sow Them," the book has good points for the audience to whom it is addressed: the women who have money enough to pay for Mr. Smart's books, who like to curl up on a sofa with a drink, and who will not mind what ordinary books on morals lack—"this very faint but attractive aroma of infidelity."

Mr. Smart does well in exhorting his clientele to forsake gossip and the boredom of contract. He has a passionate desire to see all men artists. The aesthetic experience is a wild goose, the end of ends, and, for Mr. Smart, the "core and only essential part of religion." Although Christianity must be rejected because it imposes an absolute, he sees attractive aspects in it and likes to think that the dove symbolic of the Holy Spirit might as well have been a wild goose. Actually, Mr. Smart is not an aesthete. His geese are not up in the air, for his suggestions for the good life are based on human nature. He is at his best when revealing bits from his own life as author, traveler and farmer. He is frank with himself, iconoclastic with others (except Santayana), and full of horse sense, in spite of occasional nescient remarks such as: "In most cases, I think, chastity is a cause, or result, or both, of mental disease." EMERSON HYNES.

Backbone of the Herring. Curtis Bok. Knopf. $3.00.

THERE is no reason why this book should not be read by the people who read best sellers, for it has many of the ingredients of a best seller and more. True, it's a book about justice, but certainly not of the dreary abstract kind whose usual habitation is the text-book and the legal

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opinion. True too, the goddess of justice has much to say about the doings and people in the book, but only after the author has taken her blindfold off, put her scales behind her ear and gotten from her the promise that she would put the full power of her intuitive intelligence upon the problems of the people before her. Justice without bandages may not appear as judicial as when she has them over her eyes, but there is little doubt that she becomes more attractive; her eyes reveal a new sympathy and the playful twinkle of sly humor. She has become human and nothing human is alien to her.

Judge Bok of the Orphans' Court of Philadelphia County tells about some of the cases that have appeared before him, how he settled them and why he decided to do this instead of that. The stories he tells are fascinating, and the incidents strange, but they are such as could happen to any of us. A broad and deep humanity runs through the whole book and we come away hoping that there were more judges like the central figure of the book, Judge Ulen. J. T. C.

Behind the Mask of Medicine. Miles Anderson, F.R.C.S. Scribner. $3.00.

IN THE preface we read, "What, then, is this book about? It is about Medicine in its broadest aspect, about its influence on the rise and fall of civilizations as well as about its influence upon the lives and deaths of citizens. . . . You will see, as you read, in some sort how Medicine goes about its work, what it does well and what it does ill and what it might do better. . . . And they [the doctors] will see themselves, on the assumption that any of them read it, as some of their patients see them—which should give you, patient-reader, some satisfaction. . . . Medicine . . . a social science. Indeed it is perhaps the most important of them all."

There are, roughly, three parts to this book: 63 pages of the history of medicine, 200 pages of chatty observations such as the older man is liable to over his Scotch (I know!), and 90 more on socialized medicine and the future, in the manner of the young, this time, but without bitterness. As an Englishman who has witnessed state medicine, he approves.

The author is too cultured a gentleman to impress us as infallible. He dashes into such topics as insurance, compensation, euthanasia and consultants with all the courage in the world and succeeds in sounding a shade unauthorized on each of them. EDWARD L. KEYES.

Pan-American English and Spanish Dictionary and Travel Guide. Lewis L. Sell. Putnam. $2.50.

THIS is a handy-sized book for tourists, motorists, commercial travelers. The well prepared dictionary takes 422 out of 678 pages. The travel guide part with miscellaneous information and a gazetteer of "cities of interest to tourists" is rather condensed to be of great practical utility.

Cross in the Caribbean. Albert E. Idell. Holt. $2.50.

AMATEURISH novel about corny sculptor who goes around deck of cruise boat with shirt open at the neck, talking roughly to women and showing off his muscles. Sculptor has been commissioned to carve Christus on new church designed in form of a cross and set on a hill on West Indian island. The usual fictional monks, dancer named La Caribe, and dat old debil, Voodoo, provide mild complications. Book is so badly written one is puzzled as to why it was published as serious novel. The reason seems to be current mild vogue for religious novels. H. S.

Punch and the War. Blue Ribbon. $1.00.

HERE is a good sized collection of cartoons from the wartime issues of *Punch,* that pillar of British civilization. It is abundantly evident on the face of it that the war has not cracked that pillar. The spirit behind these drawings indicates that the pillar has been strengthened, as the great piers of St. Paul's were some years back, by what might be called fortification from within. The indomitable British character has only been strengthened by the rigors and the terrors of total war, as is clearly to be seen here in the things that amuse it. The reviewer's favorite is the long suffering lady's plaintive expostulation to her newspaper-addicted companion, "*Must* you pronounce the second 'b' in bombing?" Such superiority to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, as personified by Herr Goering's *Luftwaffe,* in the interests of good speech, seems to doom Herr Hitler's crusade for a "purer" civilization. M. W.

The New Hope. Joseph C. Lincoln and Freeman Lincoln. Coward-McCann. $2.50.

IN THIS day of blood and iron, when civilizations are decapitated and humanity naturalized, the warfare of past generations seems quaint and lovely. It is a relaxation to turn back to the clumsy War of 1812 and follow the course of naval exploits that have, to us, the flavor of rousing sea stories. This is the kind of book for which one sits back and relaxes. It tells of the secret fitting out of the privateersman, *The New Hope,* the vigilance of the waiting British men-o'-war, the treachery of Royalist Cape Codders and, chiefly, of the uncertain collaboration of young Jonathan Bangs and the older Captain Isaiah Dole. Woven in is a well-told love story, and all these factors combine to make a yarn that is leisurely, genuine and completely readable. T. O. S.

The Secret Son. Sheila Kaye-Smith. Harper. $2.50.

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH is a good example of the tendency in the modern novel, and even more in the current play, to focus attention on environment or atmosphere as opposed to plot or character. Whether she writes of past centuries, as she did so well in "Superstition Corner," or of Britain, [better Sussex], in the 1930's, she seems primarily concerned with constructing a social scene.

The elements here are the cutting up of the large estates of the British landed nobility into subdivisions for jerrybuilding. Even more it is the breaking down of whatever moral leadership was exercised by the landed gentry and the failure of any adequate moral leadership from other classes to supplant it. Thus, in the author's view, British leveling off, of which we hear from time to time, is hardly a happy process. But it must be borne in mind that Sheila Kaye-Smith never was a bumptiously cheery novelist. In the midst of this convincing account of the decline of marriage it is startling suddenly to find that one of the characters had become vitally interested in Friendship House in New York. That serves to indicate the author's admiration for this heroic work in Harlem; it plays little part in her story. Viewed in retrospect the picture is unhappy, but the narrative is so competently unfolded that the book is genuinely entertaining. E. S. S.

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The Inner Forum

Reunion of Christendom

THE CHURCH UNITY OCTAVE, extending each year from January 18 (the Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome) to January 25 (the Conversion of Saint Paul) was inaugurated in 1908 by the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement of Garrison, N. Y. At the time they were still Episcopalians and eighteen months later they were received as a body into the Catholic Church. This community, founded by the late Father Paul, is perhaps best known for its work in sheltering and rehabilitating hoboes, or, as they call them, "Brother Christophers."

The unity contemplated in this octave is not so much along the line of the negotiations carried on by Cardinal Mercier and Lord Halifax or the years of Oriental studies instituted by the Holy See for the Reunion of the East and the West. It is rather prayer for the grace of corporate submission similar, say, to that of the Jacobites of India. This is reflected in the daily intentions of the Octave: the return of all "other sheep"; the return of all Oriental separatists; the submission of Anglicans; the conversion of Lutherans and all other Protestants; the conversion of America; the return of all lapsed Catholics; the conversion of the Jews; the missionary conquest of the world for Christ.

In a letter to the bishops of Catholic dioceses throughout the world, Cardinal Tisserant, secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, of which Pius XII is Prefect, has asked that in this troubled year the prayers and Communions of children be added to the customary Octave devotions. Cardinal Tisserant's message, which has the recommendation of the Sovereign Pontiff, asked that the children pray that there "may soon arrive among men the kingdom of justice, love and peace."

While the Octave is not very widely observed in the United States outside Catholic circles, a number of Anglicans here and a greater number in Britain, together with a number of Eastern Christians not in communion with Rome, join during this week in praying for the Reunion of Christendom.

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